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A

TREATISE

ON THE

PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM OF SOCIETY,

AS IT EXISTS IN

SOME GOVERNMENTS AND COLONIES IN AMERICA,

AND IN THE UNITED STATES,

UNDER

THE NAME OF SLAVERY,

WITH ITS NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGES.

BY AN INHABITANT OF FLORIDA.

THIRD EDITION, WITH AN APPENDIX.

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1833.

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PREFACE.

It will be allowed by every one, that agriculture is the great foundation of the wealth and prosperity of our Southern States. This important science has already attracted some share of attention from men of the first talents, by whose improvements in cultivation several valuable productions promise, from their superiority, to maintain a preference in foreign markets; and the recent introduction of new articles of tropical produce into the southern districts, where they bid fair to succeed, offers still greater incitements to agricultural enterprise, and opens a new and extensive range for future speculation.

While this great field of wealth and independence promises now to be well understood and duly appreciated, the primary cause and means by which alone it can be realized, has either escaped attention, or been designedly overlooked: I mean the perpetuation of that kind of labor which now produces it, and which seems best adapted, under all circumstances, to render it profitable to the Southern capitalist.

The idea of slavery, when associated with cruelty and injustice, is revolting to every philanthropic mind; but when that idea is associated with justice and benevolence, slavery, commonly so called, easily amalgamates with the ordinary conditions of life.

To counteract the existing prejudice against slavery, by making it evident that the condition of slaves may be equally happy and more independent of the ordinary evils of life, than that of the common class of whites denominated free—that they are now equally virtuous, moral, and less corrupted than the ordinary

class of laboring whites—that their labor is far more productive—that they yield more support and benefit to the State, which, under a well regulated system of management, is better fitted to endure a state of war than it would be with an equal number of free white people of ordinary means and condition; and, finally, that the Slave or Patriarchal System of Society [so often commiserated as a subject of deep regret] which constitutes the bond of social compact of the Southern seaboard of the United States, is better adapted for strength, durability, and independence, than any other state of society hitherto adopted. To endeavor to prove all this, and to destroy the prejudice existing against slavery, under the circumstances with which it is now associated in the South, is the object of the present essay; dedicated to the people of Florida, and to political economists throughout the Southern States, by a votary of rational policy, and

most respectfully
their humble servant,
Z. KINGSLEY.

⁂ See notes at the end.

A TREATISE

ON

THE PATRIARCHAL SLAVE SYSTEM.

That there is a large portion of territory in the Southern states unfavorable to the health and production of white people, is evident from the sickly appearance of nearly the whole seaboard laboring white population, extending from the Chesapeake Bay to the Mississippi. This sickly appearance is most observed among the lower orders, who are exposed to the weather; and it can only be accounted for by supposing that nature has not fitted a white complexion for hard work in the sun, as it is evident that the darkness of complexion here is a measure of capacity for endurance of labor, under that influence.

Many, from a superficial view of things, suppose that the aversion to labor observable in the South, among the working classes of whites, proceeds from natural indisposition. But a nearer view, and better acquaintance with facts will show, that the radical cause is the want of health, which produces an apathy or aversion to work and frequently a relaxation, or want of natural excitement in the powers of life, which seek artificial stimulants; as we see frequent instances of the strongest, soberest, and most industrious mechanics coming from the North, becoming, after a few years hard labor, weak and idle, and finally, falling a sacrifice to the abuse of ardent spirits. Some are of opinion, that the want of health in these classes, is owing to their being unaccustomed to a hot climate. But as many years have elapsed since the first white people settled among the Southern swamps, and their descendants have not improved either in looks or longevity, it becomes evident that people of white complexions are unfitted by nature for that situation.(2)

Some of our Northern neighbors, living in a state of health and affluence, and not being aware that this prosperous state, in many instances, proceeds indirectly from Southern slave labor, and without duly investigating, and comparing the hardships, and humiliation of the lower condition of their white population with the more comfortable state of the Southern negroes, have denounced the Patriarchal state of subordination of the latter, called Slavery, as the most abject and miserable of all possible grades of human existence. Now it appears to me, that no one state can be perfectly free from

these evils; but that all must experience some modifications of dependence.(3) The negro, under the management of a just, conscientious, and humane master, (of which description it will certainly be allowed that there are some,) who provides for the physical wants of his servants, his wife and children, in health, sickness and old age, for no other consideration than the equitable one of competent labor, when in health, will surely enjoy a happier and more enviable state of existence than the poor white man, burdened with a family, who has to contend with cold and hunger, besides religious and moral tyranny.

Moreover, the free white man, with the greatest economy and industry, usually consumes nearly the whole product of his labor; laying by but little, even under the most favorable circumstances, but with a smaller stock of prudence and exertion, which more commonly happens, he not only consumes all his earnings, but is compelled by cold, hunger, and want of employment, or ill health, to apply to the public for charity. Whereas the negro by his labor, discreetly restrained under the Patriarchal System, not only furnishes clothing, implements of husbandry, and provisions, but creates a large export surplus to meet contingencies; thus increasing the comfort and capital of the establishment, of which he considers himself an integral part.(4)

In short, the greatest value of agricultural product for export, and nearly all the springs of national and individual prosperity, flow from slave labor, as is fairly demonstrated by our annual account of exports. It could not reasonably be expected otherwise. The labor of the negro, under the wholesome restraint of an intelligent direction, is like a constant stream; that of the white man is economically measured out by his urgent necessities, or dissipated by his expenses. Besides, climate enables the one to furnish articles of greater value; while the white man's labor is usually applied to raise cheap articles of food for the mere subsistence of himself and family.

Such is the comparative usefulness of these two classes of society in our present state of peace. But to render a slave holding country stronger and equally advantageous in a state of war, against which it ought always to be prepared; or, in other words, to neutralize the spirit of disaffection which necessarily results from every unequal distribution of privileges; it will be requisite to alter a little our present policy.(5) Before, however, we begin, and by way of getting rid of some slight prejudices, it might be well to take a view of some other slave holding countries, which have already undergone the test of experiment, and successfully resisted all the disorganizing temptations and insidious machinations of powerful, but, as yet, unsuccessful enemies;(6) and endeavor to obtain safe and conclusive evidence from established precedents exactly applicable to our circumstances.

First, I will take a view of Brazil,(7) which is by far the most powerful and extensive slave holding country in America, or in the world; its population consists of something less than one million of whites, something more than one million of free colored, and considerably over two millions of slaves. It passed through such a war of revolution as our own, from the colonial state to that of an independent government, attended with all the violence of conflicting interests, opinions, and consequent hostility of royal and independent partizans, with their hostile armies. It now ranks, as Empire of Brazil, perhaps the most extensive government in the world, and is carrying on war with the free Republic of Buenos Ayres; with its white and free colored population, it has fitted out, manned, and sent to sea, nearly forty ships of war, and has raised or sent to the frontiers, nearly fifty thousand regular troops. It now affords the grand imposing spectacle of a slave holding government, whose population greatly preponderates in favor of color, at war with a free republic, which constitutionally disavows slavery, and which not only endeavors to subdue it by force of arms, but to subvert it by inflammatory proclamations, offering freedom and protection to the slaves as their reward for revolt. But all these disorganizing temptations have heretofore failed; the slaves maintain their obligation, and do their work peaceably as usual; furnishing produce and means, not only to support the national credit, but to carry on the war, and repel the bearers of these insidious proclamations. This trait of virtue and fidelity in the Brazilian slaves, is to be attributed to humane and just treatment.

The door of liberty is open to every slave who can find the means of purchasing himself. It is true, few have the means, but hope creates a spirit of economy, industry, and emulation to obtain merit by good behavior, which has a general and beneficial effect. Slaves are also allowed to hold some kind of property, under limitation—such as stock. But the grand chain of security by which the slaves are held in subordination, is the free people of color, whose persons, properties, and rights are protected by law; which enables them to acquire and hold property in their own name, and allows the free children of quarteroons by a white man, to be white by law. By this link, they become identified with the whites on one side, and with the slaves by descent on the other; a connexion which perfectly cements the three castes of which the whole nation is composed; and each being perfectly contented with its permanent, lawful privileges, the jealousy, which might otherwise arise from caste or difference of complexion or condition, is totally extinguished, and no one feels an interest in disturbing that with which every one is satisfied.

The British colonial policy is fast verging to the same point. Its object is to improve the education and mental attainments of its free colored population, as well as to protect its slaves from unjust oppression.

The free colored people are thus gradually rendered fit to take place of the whites, whose lives have long been uselessly sacrificed to a hot climate, which does not, nor ever can agree with them. They have so far progressed, as to fill up a great deal of agricultural as well as mercantile room, and most of the militia troops, with free colored people, who are good mechanics, well educated, and of great respectability: so that a very considerable share of landed property has already passed into their hands. Their law also entitles the children of free quarteroons to all white privileges, if the father is white. By this policy they unite the two castes, who become equally interested in maintaining good order and contentment among the slaves.

The Spanish, French, and Dutch Colonies have all adopted the same policy.

The island of Saint Domingo is now independent under its aboriginal name Hayti.(8) Its colonial tranquility was first disturbed by national edicts, which the French people, while frantic with revolutionary zeal, madly promulgated in their colonies. This dangerous fanaticism soon spread itself among the slave holders, who being divided in two great political factions, nearly equal in strength, armed their slaves to support their own political opinions. This, together with their pride in denying the participation of equality to the free colored people, caused the destruction of that flourishing and important colony. The fall, and final extinction of its colonial power, and its subsequent re-establishment under a free and independent government of negroes in our vicinity, furnishes, in a variety of incidents which took place during its whole course, abundant examples of situation, occurrences, and facts, from which we may establish consequences that would apply to almost every possible situation in which we could imagine slaves of a similar class to our own to be placed.

To infuse a general spirit of revolt among the numerous plantations of St. Domingo, appears to have been a matter which required both time and labor to accomplish; especially as some departments were more prudent than others, and tried to counteract it. Santhonax and Polvorel, the commissioners sent out from France to enforce the national decrees of liberty and equality, were the most active and successful propagators of liberty. But in many of the quarters, the slaves still continued to work, even without white overseers; and furnished large quantities of coffee for exportation during the whole government of Toussaint. And, what is still more remarkable, the rich and expensive department of Grande Anse continued to furnish nearly its usual quantity of produce, and remained quiet for several years after the commencement of the revolution, and until Jeremie was evacuated by the British, notwithstanding that this department was annually beseiged by Generals Toussaint and Rigaud, commanding the armies of the South and of the West,

accompanied by all their seditious proclamations. The slaves were armed by their masters, and protected themselves and families while they made abundant crops of coffee. In short, when we come to consider the massacres and bloodshed necessarily attending such a horrid revolution, where a vast number of slaves were forced into a state of licentious anarchy, and led on by partizans blinded by revolutionary fury, who gave no quarter on either side, it is astonishing that the slaves now liberated should have so soon returned to a peaceable and quiet state of domestic order, and again admitted whites to reside peaceably among them, and enjoy all the pre-eminence that condition could give.(9) But such was the fact; and considering that they were still acting on the defensive against the British, who, for many years after, and with all their disposable force, endeavored to subdue them, it is a matter of astonishment and wonder how so much produce was still made as was exported under the reign of Toussaint, and until the arrival of the grand French expedition under Rochambeau and Leclerc, (in 1802—3,) when the island was again thrown into anarchy, and would have been ultimately re-conquered but for the breaking out of the war afresh between France and Britain, which suspended the farther progress of the conquest, and finally confirmed its independence. Its government has now settled under the form of a military Republic; but the quantity of produce raised bears but little proportion to what it was under the Patriarchal restraint of its Colonial system of government, as the present state of individual emancipation implies less necessity for hard work, especially in a healthy, fertile, and mild climate such as Hayti, where few clothes are required, and bountiful nature produces spontaneously the necessaries of life.

From all these facts it follows, that, under a just and prudent system of management, negroes are safe, permanent, productive and growing property, and easily governed; that they are not naturally desirous of change, but are sober, discreet, honest and obliging, are less troublesome, and possess a much better moral character than the ordinary class of corrupted whites of similar condition.(10)

Their strong attachment to their homes, to their wives and children, and to domestic life, are likewise great securities for their good behavior; which, with a fair and equitable allowance of clothes and provisions, kind treatment when sick, and fair words when well, will, in most cases, insure good behavior, obedience, and attachment. Under these circumstances they will, without grumbling, and with very little corporeal punishment, perform a great deal of valuable labor in a year, and with profit and satisfaction to the owner, who, if prudent, will soon find himself in easy circumstances, and feel happy in experiencing the attachment, confidence, and good will of a grateful and happy people.(11)

The policy generally pursued by our own slave holding state governments with regard to free colored people, and that pursued

by foreign colonial and other slave holding governments, is directly opposite. In the latter, the free colored people have found it their interest universally and decidedly to place themselves in the scale of the whites, or in opposition to the slaves.(12) In the former, necessity, from the unfavorable construction of the laws, has compelled them universally to throw themselves into the scale of the slaves in opposition to the whites. This difference of policy adopted by these different governments, who have precisely the same views and interests to favor, and the same objects to guard against, is obviously owing to the difference of local circumstances, growing out of the different situations of the two countries with regard to population and government.

In our greatest slave holding states which take the lead, the great majority of the inhabitants is white, who boast of enjoying every privilege of free men, but possessing a strong feeling of prejudice against every other shade of color, and inhabiting a high, healthy country, suitable to the labor of white people, to whom colored labor is not absolutely necessary. This majority has the right of forming the laws to govern the minority, or slave holding part of these states, lying nearest the sea, to whom a colored population is absolutely necessary, and with the safety and good government of which a smaller degree of prejudice against color would better comport. But as the great quantity of whites in the up country is at all times ready to put down or exterminate all the colored people in case of insurrection, fear and force in governing these people are safely substituted for wisdom and policy.(14)

The operation of physical causes has induced the foreign slave holding colonies and governments to adopt a policy diametrically opposite. Their climates being unfavorable to the increase of the whites, has thrown a great majority into the scale of the free colored people, many of whom, being rich and liberally educated, enjoy great respectability, and having the same interest with the whites, and great influence with the slaves, form a barrier to insurrection; which not only makes life and property safe in time of peace, but renders the whole physical strength of the country completely disposable in time of war.

North Carolina, by the liberal provisions of her constitution and enlightened policy to her free colored people, stands firmer with regard to slave property than any state to the south, not even excepting Louisiana. A general line of limitation might be drawn between white and colored, such as exists in the British West India colonies. Taxes in all cases should be equal; and the law both criminal and civil should be as impartial as the sun. If it is otherwise, what kind of protection can be given either to person or to property; and what must be the final result where neither is given?

I believe no disadvantage has ever been perceived in North Carolina from its free citizens of color being allowed to vote.

It appears from the above statement, that to raise the value of southern plantation property to its just scale of purchase value, according to the rate of interest yielded by its neat average return of crops, to bear an equal proportion with the value and returns of real property in the north, which is the principal object of this treatise, it may be considered necessary—

1st. To put all fear of danger, either to person or property, from insurrection of the slaves, at rest.

2d. To destroy all doubt of the permanent durability of such property in case of war or invasion.

3d. To extinguish that general foreign or northern prejudice against holding slave property, which commonly arises from their mistaken view of our policy and laws to regulate slaves and free colored people.

To accomplish these objects will require a considerable sacrifice of local prejudice to the shrine of self interest, with some small mixture of discretion, which I flatter myself the present enlightened state of society, improved by its advancement in the science of political economy, will, in consideration of the proposed advantages, liberally bestow.

The red aborigines were in this low country a healthy people. The negroes are not only a healthy people, but robust and durable even in swamps.

The intermediate grades of color are not only healthy, but when condition is favorable, they are susceptible of every amelioration. Daily experience shows that there is no natural antipathy between the castes on account of color; and it only requires to repeal laws as impolitic as they are unjust and unnatural; which confound merit and condition with infamy and degradation on account of complexion, and to leave nature to find out a safe and wholesome remedy for evils which are merely imaginary.

APPENDIX.

Since the year 1829, when the second edition of this pamphlet was published, the subject of our colored population has been pretty fully discussed in several of the State Legislatures of this Union, without arriving at any positive or satisfactory conclusion, as to how it would be safest and best to dispose of them, so as to avoid the risk of reaction from their resentment.

The alarm occasioned by the massacre at Southampton, naturally caused a fear and diffidence in that quarter, which spread itself throughout the slave holding states, and operated with extreme cruelty and injustice against all the colored people, by confounding the innocent with the guilty; and it is hardly a matter of doubt whether or not the excessive rigor and cruelty of these consequent enactments has not been very prejudicial to the slave holding interest, by causing a general feeling of compassion which is naturally excited in favor of helpless innocence, when oppressed by relentless tyranny. Colonization in Africa has been proposed to the free colored people, to forward which a general system of persecution against them, upheld from the pulpit, has been legalized throughout the southern states, which leaves them the sad alternative of submitting to a condition worse than slavery, or of leaving the country to which nativity has given them a natural right, to go where sickness, privations and barbarity must soon put an end to all their troubles; in this dilemma it is to be hoped that some way of escape will present itself.

The same subject has excited an interest gradually proportioned to its magnitude, throughout all the American colonies, and has been regulated by acts of legislation dictated by circumstances connected with the views and prejudices of each.

The Swedish, Danish and French, have abolished the distinction of color where the parties are free, by admitting them to a participation of equal rights. The British have gone still further, and not only assimilated the interests of the free people of color of their colonies with those of the whites, but have threatened to extend their legislation to the emancipation of the slaves; this premature interference is generally condemned, as tending to overturn and destroy civilization, by too suddenly admitting an overwhelming proportion of ignorant and uncivilized people into society.

The Spanish colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico have flourished beyond example without altering the wise, liberal, and humane policy of their former system, which protected the slaves from acts of cruelty and injustice, and at the same time united the interests of the free colored people to those of the whites, so as to form one

consolidated mass of effective force under the complete control of their government.

Cuba, perhaps, under its present circumstances, stands more independent of external help, than any other slave holding government in America, except Brazil. Its population may be estimated at one million, one third of which is free people, all united in the same interest; the other two thirds are slaves, who, being justly treated, have never manifested any signs of discontent. Its soil is extremely fertile, its climate is healthy, its situation convenient for commerce, which it carries on with its own people, its export productions are immense, and its revenue competent for all the purposes of good government.

The empire of Brazil was left in a former edition of this work, at war with its neighbor, the republic Buenos Ayres, which has since happily terminated, and proved the possibility of a country whose revenues and government depend entirely upon slave labor for support, being so entirely independent as not to require any foreign or external protection to enable it to resist a foreign enemy, without fear of a revolt from its own numerous slave population. Since the termination of that war, several political convulsions and party revolutions have happened within it; just enough to prove its stability, but there has been no sign or suspicion of any discontent among the slaves; and it now stands fairly and firmly upon its own national resources, and solely under its own protection, unparalleled in its extent, situation, and prospects of greatness derived from its healthy climate, fertility, and extent of territory, all convenient for commerce, which is extensively carried on by its own inhabitants, and protected by equitable and just laws. It now proudly and practically claims the only banner of actual independence belonging to any slave holding state in America.

Since that period, also, our own colored population, having been consolidated into one mass and identified with slavery by our state laws, has retrogaded exceedingly in the southern states, without producing the desired effect of increasing the proportion of whites, and has proved incontestibly, I think, that the policy of persecuting the free colored people to induce them to sacrifice their native attachments and property for banishment to Africa, is at variance with the prosperity and interests of the South, and tends to lower the price of property by destroying the prospect of its durability.

By persecution we force them off, and place them in a situation to retaliate upon us in case of war, and perhaps to glut their vengeance upon us at some future period, for no person can seriously believe that they are going to remain long in a savage and sterile country like Liberia, when so many healthy, fertile, and civilized countries, every where around, are inviting them to citizenship, and we well know that revenge for cruelty and injustice is a hereditary passion in human nature: handed down from father to son, it never dies until satiated by atonement.

As any argument about the justice and right of such laws can always be answered by the plea of expediency, it would be useless to enter into it farther than to observe that the policy of unjust laws is more than doubtful in any case whatever, especially as attended by the hostility naturally consequent to acts of cruelty and injustice, which must necessarily produce resentment uncompensated for by any subsequent benefit. This could never have been fairly considered, or it never would have been attempted.

First, I will allow that it is physically possible to exterminate all the free colored people of the South, it makes no matter how; say about one hundredth part of all the free colored people of this quarter of the world is destroyed, the quantity of resentment of the remainder, and of all justly thinking men, will still be measured by the atrocity of the act.

Second. Will the same instinctive passion which caused their existence diminish, or will the same regular quantity of colored people still continue to be produced by that passion? If it will, destroying the present existing race will be playing the part of the Danaides in the story, attempting to fill the continually leaking pitcher; besides, this system of tyranny and injustice is a libel upon our pretended republican institutions, incompatible with our national character, and cannot be considered but as an affront and open violation of the morality and civilization of the age we live in. But what is still worse during its continuance, it evidently involves the necessary dependence of every individual slave holding state, upon foreign protection against itself. To point out how it would be invidious, no political association under the present laws against color could assure independence to the slave holding states. The want of ordinary population would render regular white soldiers difficult to be got as well as expensive, and quite inefficient in the sickly season, when they might be most wanted. And the want of sailors would render commerce too expensive to be carried on amongst ourselves, and foreigners would carry away as they do now, all the profits of our labor; we therefore would be too poor to meet the expenses of such an exotic and unnatural independent government. Dependence therefore is our doom; we must seek protection from the free states who have a disposable population to make soldiers of, or to man ships to protect us, and to carry away our produce together with all the profits of our labor.

The consequences of some recent attempts at independence on the part of some slave holding states bring the above facts home to us; therefore to irritate that necessary and unoffending class of people by cruelty and injustice is impolitic, and completely defeats the object of our ever becoming independent.

The whole colored population of the United States, even including slaves, would not be more than one eighth part of those who immediately surround us; destroy them all, root and branch, they

could easily be replaced at some future time; but until they were replaced, our southern seaboard country would offer a safe retreat for the bear and the wolf without competition.

Experiment is the fairest and most convincing argument; truth itself is only proved by connecting insulated facts; our mistaken system of policy has proved its fallacy by late events, and showed us that we are wrong; to persist in error is dangerous; let us take lessons from the laws of those countries which have already tested their policy by their beneficial effects with regard to slaves and free people of color, and who are all united and friendly to the interests of the whites, and to society generally; similar causes must produce similar effects; as we are the first in intelligence, so let us be first in the practice of political wisdom; and by uniting the interests of our whole population with that of our government, in support of national freedom and independence, rid ourselves of the most tormenting of all fears—that of ourselves.

Query. What would be the natural consequence of granting the same legal protection to the persons and properties of all free people alike, or the free use and benefit of the law to protect themselves?

Answer. They would all have the same means of acquiring property, and all would feel equally interested in the public welfare and peace of the country.

Query. Is the increase of free colored people injurious or beneficial to the seaboard country of the South?

Answer. In all the southern seaboard country which is unfavorable to the agricultural labors of white people, the increase of a free colored population is not only beneficial, but absolutely necessary, to its stability and to cheapen the price of labor, without which neither domestic commerce, nor mechanical operations, nor manufactures can be carried on to advantage, as is clearly demonstrated by the present state of poverty and dependence of that section, owing evidently to the want of cheap labor, which can only be obtained from a settled population attached to the soil.

Query. What national benefit is derived from the acts of outlawry now in force against the free colored people of the south?

Answer. No benefit whatever, but the greatest and most tormenting of all evils—a conscious dread of criminal guilt, arising from the known tyranny of the lawless and unprincipled part of the white population which the law authorises to perpetrate every species of wicked abuse upon innocence and unoffending color, which is entirely excluded from legal protection, except through the means of white evidence. Moral restraint without the fear of law being so rare, as to create a doubt whether or not the conscientious principle of justice, independent of legal restraint, has any real existence in the human breast.

Query. Has any property left by will to any colored person, ever been honestly and fairly administered by any white person?

Answer. Such instances might possibly have happened, but never to my knowledge.

Query. What must be the ultimate tendency of such a system of tyranny and injustice?

Answer. By exciting the indignation of the world, it must accelerate its own downfall. A government whose laws grant exclusive privileges to the wicked and abandoned part of its population, to persecute and destroy the weak of another humble part, is a government of anarchy; to call such a government a Republic, would be a gross libel on the name: it is ultra democracy or arnachy.

Query. What remedy could be proposed for this unsafe state of society?

Answer. Either to modify or repeal the most oppressive parts the laws now in force, or to improve the moral principles of the lower orders of white society by a more liberal education, such as would govern their actions by principles of moral justice, without the constraint of law; as the jealousy and injustice of the different grades of society, in their present conduct towards colored people seems to be graduated by the cultivation of their minds in moral economy, or the rule of conscientiously treating their fellow men justly, without regard to law, and just as they would like to be treated themselves, if placed under similar circumstances. Of the two remedies, the last would be the most radical and effectual, but being the most expensive and the most tedious, would come too late to remedy the present evils, which are now pressing upon society, and calling for immediate relief.

NOTES.

[1] It will reasonably be inquired, who is the writer, and how presumes he to advise in contradiction to common practice and the received opinion of nine tenths of all the slave owners of the United States? He answers that he is a slave owner, and has a right to express his opinion, having lived by planting in Florida for the last twenty-five years. He disavows all other motives but that of increasing the value of his property; moreover, he thinks that truth will support his arguments as to a subject with which he has had great opportunities of becoming well acquainted, having lived long in different slave holding ecuntries.

[2] This observation will apply to many of our farmers whose youth, strength, and ambition seem for several years to set the climate at defiance, but they are finally overcome by sickness, which brings on debility and premature old age.

[3] Northern migration to the south for the purpose of gain in winter, and southern migration to the north to spend money in the summer, finally concentrate in the north the whole product of Southern slave labor.

Slavery is a necessary state of control from which no condition of society can be perfectly free. The term is applicable to, and fits all grades and conditions in almost every point of view, whether moral, physical, or political.

It certainly is a mistaken notion, that the progress of labor, guided by the accidental impulse of single individuals, is greater than that of systematic co-operation, directed and controlled by a skilful mechanic and economist, under the patriarchal government; for it is evident that slaves taught early, could produce any kind of manufactured goods one third cheaper than free people; the co-operative system of labor being better calculated either to increase the quantity or to attain perfection in the manufacture; and whenever labor, expended in manufacturing cotton into cloth, yields more than it does when employed in raising the raw material, slaves will become manufacturers.

[4] As white people are only wanted to act as overseers, or to fill vacancies in conformity to law, their number must always be limited to these wants and easy situations. But the number of colored people must eventually be bounded by the quantity and quality of soil from which they derive subsistence by manual labor.

[5] Pride and prejudice, our present stumbling blocks in the management of our negroes, should give way to policy and the necessity of self preservation, and induce us to remove as far as possible whatever are the obvious causes of this dangerous spirit of revolt.

Power may for a while triumph over weakness and misfortune. But as all nature (from the eternal principle of self) takes part with weakness against power, the re-action finally must be terrible and overwhelming.

[6] Whoever was so unlucky as to see, on Cumberland Island, last war, the magical transformation of his own negroes, whom he left in the field but a few hours before, into regular soldiers, of good discipline and appearance, and with what despatch and celerity the recruiting service went on under the protection of a few hundred marines, notwithstanding all the care and vigilance that were used to prevent desertion, could not help figuring to himself the consequences had there been a larger force, able to maintain a position on the main, with any ulterior object of conquest in view and possessing the means of equipment. Where would they have stopped, or what could have stopped them?

[7] The empire of Brazil embraces, from north to south, about one thousand leagues of sea coast, and as many from east to west. The whole of this immense territory is a wholesome, temperate, and warm climate, is watered by the largest and most extensive rivers in the world, and possesses abundance of capacious and deep harbors for shipping, with inexhaustible quantities of incorruptible timber, of which it has already built some of the finest first-rate ships of war and

merchantmen that any country can boast of. Its export agricultural produce is fast approaching in value to that of the United States, and it is incontestably the most extensive, valued, rich, healthy, and best situated body of land under any one government in America: and bids fair, from its policy and form of government, which is a limited monarchy, to be one of the most durable. Its present population, being more than three fourths colored, will rapidly predominate on that side, on account of its convenient situation to Africa, its immense annual importation of slaves, its rich soil, its temperate and healthy climate, and more especially from its great distance, and the expense of passages from Europe. With Chinese economy it may, at some period not very remote, compete in population with that most ancient Empire, which it greatly exceeds in extent. Of all other countries, in fact, it most resembles China in its climate, fertility of soil, and complexion of inhabitants.

[8] I heard of no instance of abuse or treachery on the part of the negroes of Grand Anse, during my residence in Jeremie, while it was held by the British: nor did I experience either insult or interruption in the south or west of St. Domingo, under the government of Touissant, or Rigaud. I resided there nearly a year, at one period, besides making frequent voyages, during which I often travelled alone, and on horseback, from Leogane to the Cayes, and from Petit-Goave to Jacquemel, through woods and over mountains, with my saddle bags loaded with specie to buy coffee; and though I frequently met large groupes of armed negroes in the woods, I neither recieved insult or hindrance, but was always treated with kindness and civility. Many Americans, (I may say hundreds,) at that time on the Island, can testify to the same treatment and circumstances.

[9] This observation applies only to neutral nations. The French, who were at war and enemies, were several times not only plundered but killed within the government of Rigaud: but under Touissant, I knew of no instance of treachery, and all nations, classes, and conditions were equally protected.

[10] For the truth of this observation, I appeal to every slave holder in the south, who has had an opportunity of witnessing the conduct of white laborers who come annually to seek work from the north; whether the common plantation negroes do not conduct themselves much better and are of a more respectable moral character.

[11] Our laws to regulate slaves are entirely founded on terror. It would be worth while to try the experiment of a small mixture of reward with the punishment—such as allowing them the free use of Sunday as a market day and jubilee, which I have observed had a good effect in all foreign countries, also in Louisiana. The laws of the southern states are exclusively constructed for the protection of whites, and vexatious tyranny over the persons and properties of every colored person, whose oath can in no case be admitted as evidence against a white person. Policy and self-preservation require, to render the system beneficial, that slaves must be kept under wholesome and just restraint, which must always create some degree of resistance more or less to Patriarchal authority; to counterbalance which the interest and co-operation of the free colored people is absolutely necessary when the white population is scanty.

[12] A slave who saves my life by rescuing it from assassins at the risk of his own, or who saves the lives and properties of a whole community by informing against conspirators, must still remain a slave! and what a dreadful feeling of general resentment must originate from such a source of injustice!

[13] What greater insult can be offered to common sense, than to arrogate the conditon of freedom to ourselves, who have not the power, under any circumstances, of disposing of our property in the way we please. Is there any thing worthy of acceptance that can be offered to a slave but freedom?

If our low country is destroyed, and I lose my life and property by an insurrection, what satisfaction is it to me to know that our back country militia will promptly and bravely revenge my death and destroy my negroes? A state of war might soon produce such an event.

A very common argument against free colored people's testimony being ad-

mitted as evidence in all cases is, that their moral character is not generally so respectable. The force of all testimony must be measured by its respectability; therefore of unequal value. But that the moral character of free colored people generally, is inferior to that of the same condition of whites, I think cannot be proved. On the contrary, all unprejudiced people who have had an opportunity of knowing, and have paid attention to the subject, will say that the very opposite is the case. Even if it were not so, what a reflection on our policy and justice, to outlaw them for complexion, which they cannot help, and deprive them of the means of acquiring moral improvement, by driving them to seek shelter among the slaves! Few, I think, will deny that color and condition, if properly considered, are two very separate qualities. But the fact is, that in almost every instance, our legislators, for want of due consideration, have mistaken the shadow for the substance, and confounded together two very different things; thereby substantiating by law a dangerous and inconvenient antipathy, which can have no better foundation than prejudice. It is much to be regretted that those who enact laws to regulate slaves and free people of color, are often obliged to consult popularity rather than policy and their own good sense. If such alterations were practicable as would render slave property safe, without adopting the present system of terror, all such laws as tended to regulate plantation management, and interfere with the province of individual owners, could be repealed; property would increase in value; and the owner, no longer a kind of state prisoner, hovering over the movements of his negroes and overseers, could liberalise and improve his mind by travelling, and satisfy his thirst for knowledge wherever the advance of science offered the greatest field for its acquirement.

The patrol laws are demoralising to the whites who compose the patrol; tyrannical and unjust to the negroes; and unnecessarily supersede, in most cases, the owner's prerogative and rights over his property.

Some of our state laws, in defiance of our national treaties, condemn to indiscriminate imprisonment in the common jail, every class of free colored persons, who may arrive within their limits, without reference to sex, cause, or condition; and to be sold as slaves where they have not the means of paying the penalties annexed to the crime of arriving within the jurisdiction of the law. What must be the final consequence of such infatuation? an infatuation arraying itself in open and avowed hostility against twelve millions of people, now composing the colored population of this quarter of the world. Hayti, alone, in the full career of wealth, freedom, and juvenile independence, with equal, if not superior, advantages of climate, soil, and situation, to any equal portion of territory in the world, is evidently destined by nature, at no very distant period, if not to command, at least to share the commerce of the surrounding ocean; and, without being over peopled, comfortably to accomodate twelve millions of inhabitants.

A war of color would, in our situation, of all wars be the most dangerous, therefore the least advisable, because we naturally and unavoidably (under our present policy) contain within us the materials of our own dissolution; and nine tenths of all our present white friends would at least laugh at our absurd indiscretion.

All the late insurrections of slaves are to be traced to fanatical preachers (as, for instance, at Barbadoes and Demarara) and to white missionaries from England. Vesey, who instigated the Charleston plot, was an exhorting brother. Gualla Jack or Jack the Conjurer was a Conjurer in his own country, M'Choolay Moreema, where a dialect of the Angola tongue is spoken clear across Africa from sea to sea, a distance perhaps of three thousand miles: I purchased him a prisoner of war at Zinguebar. He had his conjuring implements with him in a bag which he brought on board the ship, and always retained them. I know two instances, to the southward, where gangs of negroes were prevented from deserting to the enemy by drivers, or influential negroes, whose integrity to their masters, and influence over the slaves, prevented it; and what is still more remarkable, in both instances the influential negroes were Africans, and professors of the Mahomedan religion.

A favorite maxim with some of our old southern politicians to increase the security of slave property, has been to prohibit the increase of free people, or, by some means or other not yet divulged, to get rid of the evil altogether. If this could be done without making the remedy worse than the disease, it would be worth while to try it; but as the iniquity has its origin in a great instinctive universal and immutable law of nature, legislation, by the aged, against such an alleged crime as propagation in youth, would be hopeless, and, like the story of the King of Arabia, who, after destroying his appetite by excess and gluttony, made a law, forbidding, under a severe penalty, that any of his subjects should be hungry.

About twenty-five years ago, I settled a plantation on St. Johns River, in Florida, with about fifty new African negroes, many of whom I brought from the coast myself. They were mostly fine young men and women, and nearly in equal numbers. I never interfered with their connubial concerns, nor domestic affairs, but let them regulate these after their own manner. I taught them nothing but what was useful, and what I thought would add to their physical and moral happiness. I encouraged as much as possible dancing, merriment, and dress, for which Saturday afternoon and night, and Sunday morning, were dedicated; and, after allowance, their time was usually employed in hoeing their corn, and getting a supply of fish for the week. Both men and women were very industrious. Many of them made twenty bushels of corn to sell, and they vied with each other in dress and dancing, and as to whose wife was the finest and prettiest. They were perfectly honest and obedient, and appeared quite happy, having no fear but that of offending me; and I hardly ever had occasion to apply other correction than shaming them. If I exceeded this, the punishment was quite light, for they hardly ever failed in doing their work well. My object was to excite their ambition and attachment by kindness; not to depress their spirits by fear and punishment. I never allowed them to visit, for fear of bad example, but encouraged the decent neighboring people to participate in their weekly festivity, for which they always provided an ample entertainment themselves, as they had an abundance of hogs, fowls, corn, and all kinds of vegetables and fruit. They had nothing to conceal from me, and I had no suspicion of any crime in them to guard against. Perfect confidence, friendship, and good understanding reigned between us; they increased rapidly. After a few years, this pleasant and profitable state of harmony was interrupted by the revolution of 1812. A war party of Seminole Indians attacked the plantation in my absence; caught, bound, and carried of, or killed, forty of them, whose reluctance in going with the invaders may be easily imagined from the following circumstance. The wife of a young man they had tied and were driving off, that her husband, who was too strong to be handled, and who had his young child in his arms, might follow; but this he absolutely refused, handing over the child to his wife, and saying that she knew best how to take care of it, but that his master should never say that he was a runaway negro; upon which the Indian shot him, and he died next day.

But my object in this long digression is to show the danger and hurtful tendency of superstition (by some called religion) among negroes whose ignorance and want of rationality render them fit subjects to work upon. I afterwards purchased more new negroes. A man, calling himself a minister, got among them. It was now sinful to dance, work their corn or catch fish, on a Sunday; or to eat cat fish, because they had no scales; and if they did, they were to go to a place where they would be tormented with fire and brimstone to all eternity! They became poor, ragged, hungry, and disconsolate: to steal from me was only to do justice—to take what belonged to them, because I kept them in unjust bondage; that all pastime or pleasure in this iniquitous world was sinful; that this was only a place of sorrow and repentance, and the sooner they were out of it the better; that they would then go to a good country, where they would experience no want of any thing, and have no work nor

cruel taskmaster, for that God was merciful, and would pardon any sin they committed; only it was necessary to pray and ask forgiveness, and have prayer meetings, and contribute what they could to the church, &c.

They accordingly formed private societies under church regulations, where all were brothers and sisters, and, under an oath of the most horrid penalty, never to tell or divulge any crime that would bring any brother or sister into trouble, but to lay all the blame on those who had not united with them, and who, of necessity, were obliged to join the fraternity, as soon as possible, in their own defence. They had private nightly meetings, once or twice a week, with abundance of preaching and praying, (for they all exhorted, men as well as women,) with an ample entertainment from my hogs, for it was no sin to steal for the church, the elders of which held it right to break open my corn house, and provide amply for the meeting; so that, finally, myself and the overseer became completely divested of all authority over the negroes. The latter even went so far as to consult the head men of the church whether or not, according to religion, my orders ought to be obeyed! Severity had no effect; it only made it worse; and I really believe that, in several instances, sick children were allowed to die, because the parents thought conscientiously that it was meritorious to transfer their offspring from a miserable and wicked world to a happy country, where they were in hopes of soon joining them!

I relate the above circumstance not from any disrespect or prejudice against any particular religious profession; but when it renders men unhappy and discontented with their condition in life, by destroying local attachment and love of country, it certainly should be rationally opposed: and I cannot help regretting that honest well meaning men, with so much ability to do good, and render mankind, especially the lower orders, happy and contented, should so misapply their talents as to subvert all natural and rational happiness, and endeavor to render our species miserable.

I was informed by a gentleman who lived near the Fishdam ford, on Broad River, South Carolina, that his employer had made an experiment on the management of negroes, of whom he was overseer, which answered extremely well, and offers to us a strong case in favor of exciting ambition by cultivating utility, local attachment, and moral improvement among slaves. He established four or five plantations, not far apart, and stocked each of them with a suitable proportion of hands, and work cattle, under a driver, who had the entire management of every thing under his (the overseer's) control. The overseer's duty merely extended to direct the driver on what land he was to raise provisions, and where cotton was to be planted; with this understanding, that all the cotton raised, after it was cleaned and packed, belong to the owner, and that all the hogs, corn, and provisions left after supplying the plantation, belonged to the negroes, who might do with it as they pleased.

The consequence of this arrangement was, that these plantations, regulated as before stated, turned out better crops than any other plantations of equal force in that neighborhood, and the owner had no farther trouble nor expense than furnishing the ordinary clothing and paying the overseer's wages, so that he could fairly be called free, seeing that he could realise his annual income wherever he chose to reside, without paying the customary homage to servitude of personal attendance on the operations of his slaves.

Good policy requires that all laws tending to demoralise the people by holding out a premium for perjury, should be abolished. Motives of policy, self-preservation, or justice, on which laws should be founded, form little or no part in such laws, as far as regards the free colored people of the South, (with some exceptions, such as North Carolina and Louisiana,) which are dictated in a spirit of intolerant prejudice and irresponsible autocracy, holding out to people they nickname free, no positive reward or premium whatever for being virtuous; nothing to stimulate to industry or the acquisition of a good name, learning, or refinement; no kind of protection either for person or property; their destiny is already fixed by a mark of nature which has doomed to irrevo-

cable disgrace its degraded bearer, who is singled out as a victim for cruelty, avarice, and revenge; whose punishment must be corporeal, not even excepting the most delicate female, whose industry and virtue alone would place her at the head of society in any other country. The fruits of their industry must be offered up as a temptation to the avarice of some nobler color, which alone is privileged to hold and protect it. In short, liberty is merely nominal, without any constitutional protection. They may be sold for debt to pay partial, exhorbitant, and tyrannical taxes or fines, all of which are unconstitutional. Oppression is carried to its greatest extreme, when a mother of the most unexceptionable moral character, leaving her family on account of ill health, and going out of her native state, is inexorably punished by perpetual banishment from her husband, children, friends, country, and all that is dear to her.

Since these severe enactments against color, several of the most respectable and enterprising young men have withdrawn from their native country and entered into the Haytian navy, and more will undoubtedly follow. I should think it were better to induce such to remain at home as friends, than oblige them to pass the Rubicon as enemies.

It has been a favorite project of some of our least mathematical economists, to transport all the colored people of the U. States to Africa, without considering that the cost of the annual increase alone, if purchased, when added to the lowest possible freight, would exceed the annual revenue of the United States. Besides, the difficulty and stern opposition that would encounter a prostration of all rights of property and liberty of person, they would have to be put on board in irons, under a strong guard, and be conveyed and landed with the same military formality, to oppose the resentment of the natives whom they must displace, as well as the vengeance of the convicts themselves, both of whose lives must be sacrificed to famine or resentment at the despotic nod of cruelty and superstition.

A great opportunity was lost of colonizing more rationally at the late evacuation of the Spanish part of Saint Domingo, where there would have been ample room for all the colored people of the U. States, within five days sail of Charleston.

A patriarchal feeling of affection is due to every slave from his owner, who should consider the slave as a member of his family, whose happiness and protection is identified with that of his own family, of which his slave constitutes a part, according to his scale of condition. This affection creates confidence which becomes reciprocal, and is attended with the most beneficial consequences to both. It certainly is humiliating to a proud master to reflect, that he depends on his slave even for bread to eat. But such is the fact.

In most foreign colonies where spring is perpetual, Saturday is allowed the slaves as a compensation for their furnishing their own provision, which chiefly consists of yams and plantains, produced almost spontaneously, or with little labor, and abundance of sweet, nutritious, and farinacious fruits of exquisite flavor, growing wild on the trees all the year round. This not only supplies them with delicious and wholesome food, but furnishes the means of traffic in the towns at night, or to carry to market on Sunday, which is every where celebrated as a day of freedom and rejoicing, similar to the practice at New-Orleans.

Let any slave owner reflect and say, how much advantage the country would derive from preaching up industry, economy, and local attachment to the slaves; and, by pointing out to them the happy coincidence and wise and beneficent dispensation of so much good which every where surrounds them, how much he would be deserving of universal respect and gratitude; instead of preaching up terror and dismay, misery and discontent, as dispensations of the supreme author of all good. All local attachment and love of virtue must be chilled or annihilated by such intemperate abuse of supreme wisdom. Any extreme is said naturally to produce its opposite. Will an excess of error ever produce truth?